United Nations

Daily Highlights

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MONDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Secretary-General tells press conference at Headquarters that he will travel to El Salvador tonight to participate in ceremonies marking formal end to conflict in that country; responds to questions relating to United Nations peace-keeping operations in Angola, Cambodia, Mozambique, Somalia and former Yugoslavia.

+ Security Council extends again mandate of United Nations Peace-keeping Force in Cyprus until 15 June 1993; Secretary-General appeals to Member States for voluntary contributions to Force, now in shortfall of over 197 million.

+ Ukraine protests Russian decision to consider status of city of Sevastopol, saying it is integral part of Ukraine.

+ Thérèse Gastaut named Director of United Nations Information Service at Geneva.

+ World Commission on Culture and Development created by UNESCO, in cooperation with United Nations; former Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar named President of Commission.

+ Six former Soviet Republics seek United Nations legal Council's opinion on whether Russian Federation is legal successor of former Soviet Union.

+ "Sharp deterioration" of situation in regions of Azerbaijan bordering with Armenia, reported by Foreign Minister of Azerbaijan.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali told a press conference at Headquarters this morning that he would travel to El Salvador tonight to participate in ceremonies marking the formal end to the conflict in that country. Despite certain difficulties in the peace process, he said, the Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberacion Nacional (FMLN) had accepted the demobilization of its forces by 15 December, as agreed to under the peace

(more)

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agreement. "This has been made possible by the reciprocal actions taken by the Government to carry out reforms agreed to in negotiations", he said.

The Secretary-General also reviewed the United Nations peace-keeping and peace-making operations in Angola, Cambodia, El Salvador, Mozambique, Somalia and Yugoslavia. On the question of the disarmament of the warring factions in Somalia, he said consultations were still being held with the United States on the nature of the participation of the Unified Task Force in that effort. The Secretary-General cited the Security Council's resolution of 3 December authorizing the use of force in Somalia, saying the Council considered disarmament "a prerequisite" before the Unified Command could be replaced by a United Nations peace-keeping operation.

Asked by correspondents what were the criterias for humanitarian intervention and why there was no such intervention in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Secretary-General pointed out that, on one hand, it was incombent upon the Security Council to decide where to intervene or not intervene, and, on the other hand, in the case of Somalia there was no government - thus making distribution of humanitarian assistance impossible - whereas in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the United Nations negotiated with Governments. "Inspite of difficulties, we are managing to distribute humanitarian assistance", said the Secretary-General.

The Secretary-General indicated that he would be going to Geneva later this year to meet with leaders of the conflicting parties in the former Yugoslavia.

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The Security Council this morning extended once more the mandate of the United Nations Peace-keeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) for a further six-month period until 15 June 1993. It took that action by adopting unanimously resolution 796 (1992), under which it asked the Secretary-General to continue his mission of good offices, to keep the Council informed of the progress made and to submit a report on the situation on Cyprus by 31 May 1993.

The Council also welcomed the intention of the Secretary-General to hold consultations with the troop-contributing Governments about a restructuring of the Force and to report on the matter to the Council as soon as possible.

In a related development, Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has appealed to Member States for their voluntary financial contribution to meet the accumulated shortfall of over $197 million in UNFICYP's budget.

In a letter to all Member States, dated 24 November, he said the United Nations had been able to meet the claims of troop-contributing countries only up to December 1981, and that it was "most unfair" that those countries should have to absorb such a "disproportionate share of the cost" of the Force.

The vital role of UNFICYP had been unanimously stressed by the Security Council time and again, and the Force continued to make an indispensable

contribution to maintaining calm on the island, a condition which, he said, was "clearly necessary" for his ongoing efforts to negotiate a political settlement.
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The Ukrainian Parliament has protested a Russian decision to have the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation consider the status of the city of Sevastopol. The protest was contained in a letter of 10 December, transmitted by the Ukrainian Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Victor H. Batiouk.

Calling the Russian move "yet another flagrant attempt to put forward territorial claims upon Ukraine", the Ukrainian Parliament stressed that Sevastopol was an integral part of Ukraine and that its status could not be determined by any other country. The decision, it said, violated the agreements between the two countries, was a glaring interference in Ukraine's internal affairs and threatened the good neighbourliness between them. Any encroachment on the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine, it said, would be considered a blatant violation of the principles and norms of international law.
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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has appointed Thérèse Gastaut, a national of France, as Director of the United Nations Information Service at Geneva, with effect from 15 December. As the Spokeswoman of the Secretary-General, based in Geneva, Mrs. Gastaut will also undertake special media and public information assignments for the Secretary-General. She has previously served as Director of the Geneva Information Service from 1984 to 1989.

Mrs. Gastaut served as spokeswoman for the Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO) and manager of the WHO Information Programme on the time of her appointment.

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A World Commission on Culture and Development has been established by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), in cooperation with the United Nations. The first ever global approach to the the subject, it will explore the role cultural factors play in the well-being of each society, and will make concrete proposals on how the international community can deepen the links between development and culture.

Former Secretary-General of the United Nations, Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, has been named President of the Commission, which will be meeting for the first time in early 1993. Serving with him will be five honorary members widely recognized for their intellectual, political and cultural

contributions: Prince Talal Ibn Abdul Aziz Al Saud of Saudi Arabia, Claude Levi-Strauss of France, as well as three Nobel Laureates, Aung San Suu Kyi of Myanmar, Ilya Prigogine of Belgium and Derek Walcott of Saint Lucia. The other members of the Commission, represent a similarly distinguished international spectrum of academic, cultural and governmental authorities.

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The representative of Estonia, speaking on behalf of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Estonia, Lithuania and Moldova, has proposed that the United Nations Legal Council be asked to submit a written opinion on whether the Russian Federation is the legal successor State of the former Soviet Union.

Addressing the General Assembly's Fifth Committee (Administrative and Budgetary) over the weekend, the Estonian representative also asked whether it was legally valid, as decided by the Committee on Contributions, to redistribute a portion of the former Soviet Union's assessment among Armenia, Azerbaijan, Estonia, Georgia, Latvia, Lithuania, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, instead of assessing the individual countries as new Member States.

The representative of the Russian Federation said it was inappropriate to question the competence of the Committee on Contributions. If the former Soviet States were to be assessed strictly in accordance with their capacity to pay, then his country, too, should be assessed on that basis.

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The Foreign Minister of Azerbaijan has informed the President of the Security Council that there has been a "sharp deterioration" of the situation in the regions of Azerbaijan bordering with Armenia. According to a statement transmitted to the Council President in a letter, dated 11 December, regular units of the armed forces of the Republic of Armenia were actively attempting to carry out offensive action along the Armenian/Azerbaijani border. The Azerbaijani Foreign Minister said "this aggression, and the occupation of the Lachin area", had finally destroyed "the myth of Armenia's non-participation in the conflict around Upper Karabakh".

He called on the international community to make all possible efforts to end the Armenian aggression, and described the attempts by Armenia to appeal to the international community that it was "suffocating in the grip of a blockade", as "utterly absurd".
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